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EXECUTIVE AND PERSONNEL
MANAGEMENT
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FOR THE BETTERMENT OF THE
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ADMINISTRATIVE STUDIES

By Rex King

Supervisor Crook National Forest, Region Three

It does not require a detailed study to show that time is the greatest element of expense of the Forest Service, nor does it require any effort to prove that by far the greater portion of our time goes into the supervision or direction of the action of others. In only minor instances does a Forest Officer accomplish final results with his own hands. Of course we write reports and letters, inspect ranges, and cutting areas, etc., but it would be short-sighted to consider that such jobs, although constituting definite units, accomplish results in themselves. As a matter of fact, they are merely steps toward an end and their real purpose is to get others to do the things which will accomplish the ultimate results. If there ever was a day in the service when a man did all his work for and by himself that day is now gone. In almost every branch a man is helpless without the intelligent, loyal, and energetic action of others. The ranger does not herd the cattle in a way to use the range correctly, nor does the timber sale man pile the brush to prevent fire and foster reproduction. Each gets his results through the operator by his influence, pleading, threatening, and what not.

In almost everything we have to work through others; sometimes through other members of the force, sometimes through permittees, sometimes through the general public—call it personnel management, executive management, administration, supervision or what you like. Nevertheless we—the rank and file—know little beyond the old rule of thumb methods in approaching problems in these fields. Research along the purely technical lines has received a great deal of attention. One has only to reach up on a shelf to get a bulletin on “How to keep loblolly pine out of corn fields in Snuff Center” or “Why roots can’t possibly be trained to return to A horizon after having wandered on into G horizon”. The supervisor could easily find out exactly what to do when the seedlings damp off in the nursery—if he had a nursery—but what does the poor devil find when he reaches up for help when the clerk blows up and the vouchers stop or the rangers gang up and pull a report strike, or five road crews simultaneously go on the big buying spree without telling anybody else what they buy? He may find a first aid manual covering the repair of a broken leg, but how about first aid in fixing up a badly shattered work plan?

Fundamental technical research is very important in itself. There is no argument there, but it is not the only form of research needed, especially when we take the view that the Forest Service has as great or perhaps greater obligations to manage well the government properties (the National Forests) as to stimulate conservation on privately owned properties.

It is frequently admitted that technical research is now ahead of actual accomplishments on the National Forests. Why? It would seem that we now know fairly well what our product should be, but that our machine is either so inadequate or so out of adjustment that it does not turn out that product. Under similar conditions a mechanic would over-haul his machine. However, that mechanic before starting on the over-haul would know a lot about machinery. He would have to, to be a mechanic, and it would be possible for him to have that knowledge because there has been a great deal of study put in on machinery. But when we start to over-haul our administrative machine, to find out why the clerk blew up, or why a ranger will undergo real hardships in inspecting a range, but seems to find it impossible to put down on paper what he found there, we are painfully aware of our helplessness. We don't know how to go about it. Of course in the past we have tried. We have used in the aggregate, probably tons of tobacco, tons of paper, and tons of headaches, but each one of us, apparently, has managed to keep the results absolutely confidential and so no one has had the advantage of the other fellows mistakes. Perhaps if all of the studies that have been made could be placed end to end they would reach from here to the solution of the problem, but they have not been placed end to end; they are all lying side by each and most of them buried.

The point of the whole thing is that administrative studies or research is a very necessary thing, especially to us at this time. The pioneer, slashing, hard riding period is over and an economical smooth running organization is in order. Private industries have done much in management research and although we can use a good many of their conclusions we can not apply their results directly for one big reason; because the ultimate product of industry is the profit in dollars and cents—an easily recognized and measured commodity. Ours is—what?

I do not believe any one will deny the fact that administrative studies are needed. I think even our so called optimist friends who are surprised, but never disappointed that the moon does not rise full every night, will admit that a little overhauling research will not hurt the machine. The difficulty however is how to go about it, and incidentally how to find the time to do it. Most of us would be glad to start but how? There is no use in everyone doing the same thing. A comprehensive plan and the splitting up of the problem and dividing the work is the natural course, but even then there is the question of method of attack. Methods are considered highly important in technical research and if they are important in studying a tree, which remains in the same place year after year and never argues back, they are doubly important in studying human beings. And after all, is not human nature the biggest factor in administration; both the fuel and the gears of our machine?

REVIEWS

Research in Industry by C. F. Hirshfeld, Chief, Research Department, Detroit Edison Company. Published in *Mechanical Engineering*, July, 1931, Presented at meeting of the A. S. M. E.

“As engineers you have been taught the research method. You have been taught to marshal all available facts and to then make the best decision that you can in the light of those facts. And you have expected to spend your lives applying this method to the solution of certain industrial problems, such as design, fabrication, construction, sale, or even possibly management. You have, all unawares, planned to apply the research method to the component parts of industry.

“But I feel very certain that some of you are going to find the world calling upon you to solve in an engineering way problems which are not of an engineering character. And this not because you are engineers but because you are trained in the research method; because you instinctively base opinion, decision, and action upon the best determination of facts at the time available. It is a glorious and a romantic task that those of you who will be so chosen have before you.”

The above quotation will give you an idea as to the position taken by Dr. Hirshfeld in his article. While not under-valuing the need for research in chemistry, physics, and other physical sciences, he believes, with many others, that the rapid progress of the immediate future will depend more on the application of research methods to other types of problems, particularly those involving human relations. “This latter movement is only just started.” In industry it will express itself in the study of all kinds of executive and personnel problems which in the past have been taken for granted. Further, it will not depend on a few high power scientists studying a few big problems but on a lot of lesser men studying a whole lot of little problems. In fact everything we do should be questioned. Probably nothing is done in the best way. But just changing does not necessarily mean improvement. The change should result from a study following research methods and even then the result should be tested before it becomes standard. But I am getting ahead of my story.

The article starts out with a number of questions about familiar things such as “have you ever wondered why fruits change color as they ripen?” The idea being to establish the fact that most people, even educated people, are willing to accept without understanding and without question all things with which they are familiar. In the ninety’s how many men ever questioned the idea that a man’s hair should be short and a woman’s long? In government, in business, in our own organization most of us accept the old stand-by methods and ideas as correct. We do not think of

them as right or not right, but just accept them. We say that we learn by experience when in reality we should say that we become familiar with accepted practice.

On the other hand there always has been the exceptional individual who questioned things. In the beginning without a method or a means of measurement they let their imaginations answer. This gave us a flat world and Thor and all that went with it. After a long, a very long time there developed a technique—a method—what we call now the Scientific Method. No longer would pure fiction satisfy, at least not in the physical sciences. It was first accepted by a few and gradually by others, until during the last fifty years or so great advances have been made. As mentioned above this method of finding answers is spreading to include administrative problems—the application discussed by King in his paper.

What is this Scientific or research, method? Suppose we want to find out about some phenomenon such as the growth of yellow pine or the best method of inspecting a sheep range. We may speculate as to what it is but as long as we confine ourselves to speculation there will be several answers but no way of deciding between them. But suppose we are sufficiently skilled to devise a method of measuring, we may then be able to determine with reasonable accuracy which is right. The method is a combination of imagination, intuition, and measurement. Research in industry includes a scientific search for truth in chemistry, in metallurgy, in transportation. In fact it should include every activity. But “we are very apt to assume that that which has worked in the past must be correct and must work in the future. This is actually the assumption in the greater part of industry today.” Knowledge is handed down from executive to executive, (or from ranger to ranger) and in most cases they have been satisfied to accept it.

“But just as happened with respect to the interpretation of natural phenomena, there have been here and there individuals who have questioned tradition and other forms of inherited lore, * * * taking the stand that every single step in a process must justify itself as of today.”

And thus there is gradually growing here and there, an appreciation of the possibilities latent in the application of the scientific method to the checking of tradition and in the improvement of traditional methods. And once having applied the searchlight of research to administrative problems it becomes evident that here is a tool that opens the way to ever increasing improvements. It may be in technical practice or it may be accounting or in personnel or in planning, that improvement is most needed but all these things can and will be improved. With most of us the tendency is to accept things as they are. But progress depends on those unsatisfied individuals who question things.

And who should do this? Dr. Hirshfeld believes that we all

should. "Each foreman and each superintendent and so on up to the top of the ladder must be insistent upon operations on the basis of determined facts as against opinion, belief, tradition, or what not. Each of these individuals must be a living question mark, and this will require considerable rebuilding in some cases. Each must be forever asking himself, "why do we do it this way? Is there any better way? Am I merely resting on opinion?" etc. Also, "each must instill into his subordinates the never-ending quest for facts." This strips from research much of its mystery and glamor. But to be a serviceable tool it must be understood and used. It will not produce an Utopia or a millennium. Changes come slowly, stage by stage. But they do come. "And it is my firm belief that we shall so rise to the extent that we extend the research method from its cradle in laboratory * * * to the much larger and more worthwhile field of human relations."

And what does all this mean to the Forest Service, if anything? Here we find it necessary to descend from research to opinion. We have just been told that in industry one man's opinion isn't worth much, but anyhow I am giving you mine, and I'll bet that some of you will agree with me.

As I see it, our situation is something like this: we have a very large and very difficult administrative job; a diversified business including something of everything, yet usually handled under exceptionally difficult conditions. That we could by any chance know the best way to do all these things without study seems unlikely. On the other hand, for our technical problems we have a large, highly rated, well equipped organization. Our technical studies are therefore well taken care of. But if these other problems are to be studied you must do it. Not all at once, but gradually, here and there, putting first one thing to the test and then another. What needs it? Everything you do. A couple of years ago we agreed that about ten per cent of your work was technical and the other ninety administrative. In the past our research emphasis has been on the ten per cent. Why not put a little of it on the ninety?

And just one other thing. In the quotation with which I began, Dr. Hirshfeld tells the engineers that because they are engineers they instinctively base decision on fact. That statement does not conform to my experience. True they have been trained in research methods. So too have foresters. But say research to a forester and he thinks silviculture. Likewise say research to an engineer and he thinks engineering. But as the quotation says, such of them as do acquire the habit of applying the method to other problems as well, will without doubt be called to bigger and broader opportunity. Likewise such Service men as acquire this habit will not remain Service men. They too will be called to bigger things. But the Service will not lose thereby, for before you go you will have inspired someone else to carry on the work.

* * *

The Endless Spirals of Progress by Joseph H. Barber. Presented before the "Industrial Marketing Executives" of New York and published in "The Management Review".

This paper was prepared not as a discussion of research but as a prologue to a discussion of marketing. I am briefing it for you because of its general interest. Much of the material is quoted direct. It recognizes a condition that exists and the attitude, or approach, to business problems that is rapidly changing business, not because all business men hold this point of view but because those who do become leaders.

What every executive tries to do is to make effective in practice those fundamental policies on which his business creed is based. But the danger comes from the establishment of habits. Minds are prejudiced in favor of the familiar. Yet we live in a world of constant change. Half the population are under twenty-six years of age. A business generation is only ten years. Equipment is depreciated in five to ten years. The old cling to familiar methods, while the young, coming into power, create a constant state of flux.

"Evolution breeds revolution. Revolution compels readjustments. Readjustment depends on fact-finding. Fact-finding inspires research. Research employs analysts. Analysts pioneer for progress. And progress generates further evolution. Completion of the last step in the sequence brings us back again to the first stage and we begin to repeat all over again the never ending spiral of progress."

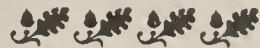
Progress is achieved by opposition to the existing order. The average mind accepts those methods which have been followed for a considerable time, resents change and believes unworkable that which has never been used before. "We have always done it this way" is a common argument that a method is right. We need some device or procedure that will help us to accommodate ourselves to change.

Few changes are wholly good—or wholly bad. A thing can be neither condemned nor accepted just because it is new. We need basic factual information by which to judge. But facts do not present themselves gratis. They must be sought after. For a continuing flow of pertinent facts a systematized fact-finding process is needed. Such a process will disclose laws that may be depended upon in a practical way; it will establish yardsticks by which to discover economic waste, time losses, useless functions, obsolete tools, and extravagant methods.

New business problems are apt to be confusing. They are like a peck each of apples, peaches, pears, and oranges all mixed up in one big basket. We do not know whether there is the right amount of each or not. But we can sort them out. Likewise the analyst singles out the causes and motives in the administrative problem

and lays them out side by side in neatly arranged rows. Thus must the executive depend on research to evaluate new factors, analyze trends and inject into future planning some wise provision to allow for the unexpected.

When an executive comes to have confidence in fact-finding generally applied to all problems of business he adopts a major policy, "test before trying". But facts and their analysis will not carry the whole load. Judgment is still needed to bridge the gaps. But the orderly classification of knowledge, joined to increasing skill, well may make complete control of executive problems a possibility.



SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

The subject for discussion is "Administrative Studies" with Rex King leading off with the first paper. The first thing you will notice about King's discussion is that he uses the term to mean just what the words imply—studies of administration—and not the manual definition (page 8-R) which seems to be "studies made by administrative men".

What I would like for you to do is to look over the situation and see whether or not there is a field, outside the technical studies covered by the manual, that should be covered. King seems quite positive that there is. The engineers whose papers are reviewed by me in this issue, think that there is. If so, what sort of things are they? King's argument is that technical research is now ahead of administrative practice and therefore the thing to do is to give more attention to the study of administration—find better ways for doing things. We all know that whatever we now do will someday be done differently. Will the new method be based on a hunch or an opinion or a systematic test? What has been the rule in the past?

Perhaps this case will illustrate what I mean: Several years ago there was considerable complaint from supervisors about the form for an annual report. A committee was appointed to revise it—simplify it. One member of the committee suggested a number of questions for inclusion, which seemed unnecessary to the purpose of the report. When asked what he wanted with the data, his reply was that they would "be nice to have". Now if it were our policy to base such things on studies followed by tests, I wonder how much of the "nice to have" stuff would have gotten into the form.

That—reports—is just one group of things that might be studied. There are many others. Dr. Hirshfeld says in his article that everything we do should be included. "Test everything". Every standard should be based on a systematic study and then periodically tested. For, you know, a good standard this year may

not be good five years from now.

Such studies are sometimes easy, sometimes difficult. King emphasizes the need for human relations studies. They are by far the most difficult to make. A few such studies have been in progress by research men in one plant of the Western Electric Company for the last three years. It is interesting to note that the problem they started on is not the one on which they have done most work. It is also interesting to find that the thing which they have established most conclusively is contrary to all accepted beliefs of the past. This proves Dr. Hirshfeld's contention that we accept the familiar and also that traditions need testing. The difficulty with such studies is that the work is pioneering—no techniques have been developed as in the physical sciences. While these new things are difficult there is left a broad field wherein old techniques apply.

But even so, I am still at a loss as to what I should ask you to discuss. Perhaps I might leave that to you. But some of you have asked me to make suggestions. Of course, you are at liberty to discuss any phase you like. If any statement by King or any statement in the reviews makes you want to say something, why, say it. Such discussions will help to cover all angles of the question.

Of course, there is a phase to it that is out of our realm. Policies, standards, instructions are handed down to us from above. Some problems are bigger than our job and should be studied elsewhere. Whether or not administrative problems should be studied by the Research organization might be interesting to discuss but would get us nowhere. It is not ours to decide. What interests us most is the problem on the Forests, if there is one. With this in mind but without definite limitations or inhibitions, consider the following suggested topics:

1. As a general proposition how does the idea of making systematic studies to determine how best to do common everyday jobs appeal to you? Add to this the idea of testing methods before they are made standard. Are the two things practical?

2. Is there a phase of this subject that can be handled on the Forests? Who will do it? How about time? Dr. Hirshfeld says that everybody within his own sphere should be in on it. We should question everything we do. How about it?

3. How reconcile the idea of standard methods with the idea that everything should be questioned? Would Dr. Hirshfeld's idea that each man should be a "living question mark" throw down the bars to each man to do things his own way?

4. King's last paragraph. After all this is a better suggestion than either of mine.

5. Here is a question that came up here the other day and it occurred to me that you might like to get in on it. As stated in the

manual, the Supervisor is responsible for the work of each man on his force; to redeem this responsibility, each must be trained and supervised and the work of each inspected. It therefore follows that the addition of a man to a Supervisor's staff creates new work for the Supervisor. How much? For example, the work becomes heavy and an Assistant Supervisor is assigned. This is not like adding an additional laborer to a crew. True he does a part of the old work but his doing it creates a new job. How much time should the Supervisor give to inspecting the work of his assistant? This was touched on incidentally in our discussions of organization last year. It is a practical administrative question. It may not have been given much thought except where analyses have been made. Possibly it should be "studied" as suggested in the articles reviewed. Anyhow, I am suggesting it as number five. What is your idea?



Note: I should like to have your discussions before Christmas but this is a poor time of year to hurry you, so let us say January 11. You can all have them in by that date. P. K.

Note 2: Number five above is a new departure. In it I ask you to discuss a subject which has not previously been discussed. How do you like that method? P. K.

DISCUSSIONS OF THE PROPOSED CHANGE OF METHOD

Although most of you so far seem to favor publishing the Lessons and discussions in separate pamphlets as heretofore. I am putting them together this time just as a trial. It would be handier in some ways, but possibly not so handy for reference.

Aside from this, the idea of the change is quite favorably received. Almost everyone prefers the new method and no one objects. Of course we don't know yet just how it will work out in practice. I think though that you will like this second sample.

As to subjects for discussion, we already have more than we can possibly discuss this year.

The indications are that most of you prefer publication every three weeks. We are slower than that this time. Beginning with January we can probably do it.

The method of distribution proposed seems to be approved. Some have suggested the approval of the Regional Forester, but that scarcely seems necessary. Supervisors may ask for what they want. And now that you have seen the second sample please let us know at once so that we will know how many to have printed. We cannot afford a surplus.

I know you will be interested in the following discussions which show what others think about the new plan and what has been suggested by them for future discussion. As suggested by several, we are giving another lesson or two to administrative studies.

James E. Scott

White Mountain

Laconia, N. H.

I like very much the plan for this winter's study course. "Closer touch with current problems" is bound to result, I think, in greater benefit to each of us and a more fruitful application of what we learn to our daily work, the work of the Service. Here is one suggestion which might possibly strengthen the general plan for the Course. All through the winter current problems in National Forest executive management will be studied and discussed "informally" by the men most vitally concerned with such problems. The Forester, as the chief executive, particularly wants this discussion feature retained. Presumably, he has some way of digesting these discussions at the close of the Course, of separating wheat from chaff, of reducing these reams of informal discussion to a definite usable listing of the most constructive thoughts and suggestions which are offered toward improvement of our executive practice. Or has he? At any rate, it seems to me we want to keep the whole thing focused or pointed toward such specific improvement, and that it would be highly desirable to publish every autumn a brief statement of specific new standard practices which have been developed through the studies of the preceding winter and which have won the Forester's approval. How would it do to have the Supervisors of each Region select each

spring one of their number to serve on a committee which would review and digest the discussions of the winter and present to the Forester the results, as nearly as possible in the form of definite new standards.

To this same end, let P. K. standardize somewhat the form of his "suggestions for discussion" which are a part of each "lesson" to include definite questions on current practice which all participants are invited to answer, first with a "yes" or "no" and more fully by explanatory or substantiatory discussions.

The choice of "Administrative Studies" for the first discussion is good. It should be worth two or more. Six "discussions" at intervals of three weeks would be about right. Limit the time when discussions must be in and publish all contributions on the same subject at once or in one cover. Separate lessons and discussions as in the past. Let's do one subject at a time, breaking up each one into its integral parts so that discussions will be more orderly.

I should like to have our Office Management made the subject of one discussion. I harbor the belief that the Service as a whole, with its perfectly natural "field-mindedness" pays a terrific price for low-standard office management; that while we generally and certainly in the field subscribe to the belief that providing the best tool is an essential part of efficient job performance, we fail widely as executives to appreciate that our "offices" are really working tools and fail to keep them "greased and sharpened".

I believe that a "discussion" of our chaotic system of Manuals, Handbooks and circular letters would inevitably lead to a major reform, and hence, would like to see such a discussion included in the six. Could we develop through the Course, or is there already in existence a really satisfactory method or procedure or vehicle for translating the results of supervisory field and office inspection into usable personnel ratings and usable permanent records of administrative progress? What is the future or the ultimate development of the "Region"? Is the fundamental individuality of the particular National Forest being unwisely submerged in an unnatural and wholly artificial individuality or entity which we call a "Region?" The training and rating of the probationer may be worth a discussion.

This study course material should, I believe, go to all Supervisors and **Assistant Supervisors** individually. In addition, it should go on request.

And finally—failure to submit discussion papers should not be taken as proof of lack of interest. I know it just doesn't follow.

Sam R. Broadbent

Choctawhatchee

Pensacola, Florida

1. The course idea of the past is satisfactory as far as I am concerned.

2. "Administrative Studies" is an excellent subject. I believe we have a lot to learn and should have a lot to say about these studies.

3. Have lessons every two weeks or three weeks. If some of us have to miss some lessons we will just have to miss them. Just now we have a full fire force on duty, and this has upset everything, and this is being written most hurriedly, as a result of our situation. We have a 12 months work season here and I have yet to find official time for study courses, but I can do my best. By all means set a date for submitting lessons, or "manana" will rule.

It is my suggestion that the bars be let down for all comers. The more the merrier, and then there will be no "repression" in your work.

Instead of publishing all answers, why not brief them?

C. A. Mattson

Fishlake

Richfield, Utah

While I have appreciated very much the study courses given during the last four years, I feel that the proposed change will be to the best interests of all who participate in the course, because it is quite evident that we are most concerned with subjects that can be tied in more closely with going interests. However, the courses heretofore given should be considered as a background or foundation on which to base procedure and conclusions of any live problems that may be discussed during the present winter period. The executive management principles that have been proved to be beneficial in getting satisfactory results, or in attaining desired objectives, should be the guide posts in the discussion of every-day problems, and should not be set aside, unless something better has been determined.

In addition to Administrative Studies, I believe it would be profitable and to the best interests of the Government to discuss the question of cooperation among different bureaus of the Department of Agriculture, as well as with bureaus of other departments who have to do with problems closely related to the work of the Forest Service. Administrative objectives, particularly those affecting land uses, have, in a number of cases, been set aside or defeated by the work of some other bureau. Cooperation should, in so far as it is possible, exist between different governmental bureaus, and in case of differences of opinion, decision should not be made until all the facts have been determined.

Personnel classification, retirement, and leave, might also be of interest in the discussions.

All Supervisors and Assistant Supervisors should participate. Rangers, who the Supervisor feels would take an interest and profit from the lessons, should also have the opportunity to take the course, and any officer, whether he takes the course or not, should have the privilege of being heard, providing he has anything

to say.

I believe the best results will be obtained if lessons are sent out every two weeks. Ten days seems to be too short a time, and four weeks too long a time.

L. B. Pagter

Mount Baker

Bellingham, Wash.

1. The new proposal sounds all right. It is rather difficult for some of us, I guess, to transmit our ideas to paper. I remember I did far better at school, when I got instruction direct, rather than to have to dig it out by reading. We of course can't get this instruction by contact, so the next best thing is to get it by discussion. Some of us can't discuss as well as others, but certainly we should profit from what we do get to read, and perhaps in time, our own latent desire to be heard may break forth in type.

2. Administrative studies were gone into by Regional Office committee early last spring, so the idea has been started in this Region. I believe it is a good subject to start the course off with.

3. Every 3 or 4 weeks, the time when discussions must be in will have to be set. My preference would be to have lessons and discussions together. Discussions—publish a group of them this time and some more the next. Might branch out to take 2 or 3 subjects at one time.

4. Should be no limitations as to who may take part. Better ideas should be forthcoming and make it easier for P. K. to choose discussions for publication.

Perry A. Thompson

Cascade

Eugene, Oregon

1. I believe I prefer your general idea of the course as outlined in this first lesson. There should be many problems suggested for this discussion by the various supervisors.

2. I would like to see a discussion of "Recruiting Short Term Personnel". How can we secure the high type of men our work demands? How much preference should be given to forestry students and younger men? How can we keep these men from year to year? How can we train them quickly—these and several other questions are always troublesome to the forest administrator.

3. I think one lesson each two weeks is about right. Even so, we will probably not be able to devote much time to all of them. The time when discussions should be in must be limited. I believe the lessons and discussions should be included in one publication and all discussions of a subject should be published at one time. I do not believe it advisable to discuss two or three subjects at any one time. If the subjects are well chosen there should be plenty to say about each one of them.

4. I think that Assistant Supervisors and other staff officers should participate if they wish. I know I shall at least circulate

my copy of the lesson and discussions among the forest personnel and I shall also forward you any pertinent comments which may be made by the rangers or other officers.

James E. Ryan

Kaniksu

Newport, Wash.

I like the idea you have outlined for the study course this year. I believe the past study course was very fine and no doubt, the proposed plan will not deviate to any radical extent from the principles of the former course.

I am somewhat in the air in respect to suggesting topics for discussion. Your first selection sounds mighty interesting and should be good for at least three lessons. I shall endeavor to suggest a topic before the end of the course.

It is believed the discussion should be required within a specified period. Probably, three week intervals would be about right. It strikes me as rather difficult to hold each discussion to strictly one subject. I should say, it would be desirable to include other closely allied subjects in at least some of the discussions.

I have observed that other men in the organization have displayed a keen interest in the past discussion and feel these men should have an opportunity to participate.

J. F. Campbell

Fremont

Lakeview, Oregon

1. It seems to me that with the general study courses of the past few years as a background we are now ready to take up going problems. I favor the proposal to discuss problems—specific and general submitted by supervisors or other executives.

2. Administrative plans, you have said, will be covered in the next lesson or two. This is a big subject and one that should be of very real interest to us.

In addition I should like to have discussed some specific phases of our personnel management, such points as the probationary period, subsequent development of the employee, transfers, both to place square pegs in square holes and for the purpose of developing and broadening the younger officers, personnel rating methods and so on.

Then there is the matter of organization on the forests. I refer particularly to the division of work between members of the supervisor's staff. We are of course committed to the principle of using the ranger district as the operating unit. However, it is obvious that some lines of work can be most economically and effectively handled directly by members of the supervisor's office or by special men employed for the purpose. This subject is important and should afford us a fertile field for discussion.

It is a simple matter to accomplish work if the best procedure is known. The plumber doesn't cut his threads befort determining

the desired length of his pipe. The executive's work could be greatly simplified if he would determine the best procedure to follow in securing results on his unit. Many of these procedures could be stated in the administrative plan and that brings us back to the point of beginning.

4. It seems to me that if the organization on a forest or other unit is to function harmoniously that those members of the staff who are in important executive positions should take the course. Perhaps you will decide that only the supervisor's papers can be published.

Huber C. Hilton

Medicine Bow

Laramie, Wyo.

Reference is made to your inquiry concerning the discussion course on executive and personnel management.

1. I would prefer the change in plan as suggested by you, but I am doubtful that it will prove as satisfactory to you as a leader (I almost said teacher) for the reason that since it is flexible, the response may be not as prompt as in former courses. To be of most value, we should have access to the new books and I can probably get these through the University here.

2. The problem which I should most like to see discussed is that of standards of work. Just what should we expect and require of Forest Officers, particularly Rangers. You will recall that we discussed this at Tres Piedras, requiring that the jobs be done according to the instructions and standards, yet knowing that on the Forests, work could not be done that way. My personal feeling has been that we are too lenient with personnel and that they know it. With present salary paid, I feel we should require better work than we do. This is in effect a question of personnel management.

I am interested in Administrative Studies and we can well spend several lessons on it. Once started, this should develop some worthwhile discussions.

3. I suggest sending out lessons every two weeks, limit time for reports of discussions, separate lessons and discussions, include all discussions received in one publication, discuss one subject at a time, or we will be tied in a knot never to escape. Field men, at least many of them, will keep you informed of live problems to them.

4. Include all Supervisors and such administrative assistants as Regional Forester may designate. Combine printed discussions to material selected by yourself which really applies to the subject being considered and which really contributes something worthwhile to the discussion.

C. E. Favre

Wyoming

Kemmerer, Wyoming

1. I have read the general outline for the proposed discussions this year and believe that the new plan will be much better than

the one we have followed during past years. It seems that this method will create more interest and will no doubt keep us better informed on the current problems of the day.

2. At the present time I have no thought of any special problems that should be discussed or any of the lines of work which are special activities in relation to personnel which should receive attention. Certainly, our administrative studies should be discussed but anything else which has to do with management of personnel will furnish valuable information for all of us. One thing that might be considered as a side issue more or less, would be a short analysis of the Retirement Law. I read the analysis given in the Administrative Bulletin but it appeared to me quite general and did not carry explicit advice as to what would be done with sums of money already in the fund, and other pertinent points which I would like to know and talk over with the members of our organization, particularly those who are planning for this relief sometime soon. Concrete examples of our own men, specific amounts deposited and amounts they may withdraw, stating specific sums of money, would be appreciated. Of course, this can all be gotten through our regular channels, but perhaps a general discussion of retirement as it affects personnel, might be of interest.

There are many other such problems more or less tied up with the good of the personnel in the organization which I believe can be more thoroughly understood by all of us. I doubt if all of our organization know all about what rights they have under the Compensation Law. These are things that really affect the morale and spirit of the organization in that they show the care and thoughtfulness that the employee has in helping each individual to be free and independent, not only now, but when he has rendered his full service and is ready to retire. I am not so much interested in these problems merely from the standpoint of the problem itself, but more in relation to the effect that it has on the various members of the organization to thoroughly understand just what is provided for them. I am sure that through these discussions we will be able to learn the most up-to-date procedure in personnel work, since, as the discussion states, you have time to review literature and to pick out the very things which we need to know. Certainly, we are fortunate to have such an arrangement whereby this kind of literature can be reviewed and only that part furnished to us that pertains to our work, thus eliminating much duplication of time if we tried to determine these things for ourselves, and also insuring that we learn of the best practices.

3. I believe that these discussions, submitted at two week intervals, from now until March, will be most satisfactory. I am not much concerned as to how many subjects are treated in each discussion so long as each subject is given the full amount of space which it deserves in order that it may be properly explained. Certainly if we do not have time to cover all of the important subjects

without discussing more than one in one discussion, then we should have more than one with each lesson.

4. It is felt that anyone desiring to receive these discussions should be furnished them upon application, and that certainly each discussion should be sent to each Supervisor's office. I believe it would be a mistake not to limit the time within which any individual should turn in his discussion to your office.

E. G. Miller

Coconino

Flagstaff, Arizona

1. I would like to see your plan carried out. It is impossible to make a positive statement regarding the general idea but I believe that we shall like it.

2. One subject that we would like to see discussed: "What will be the prospects for rangers and technical foresters in the Forest Service during the next five years", is the tendency going to be to reduce the numbers of employees? We get quite a number of inquiries from "would-be" rangers, Range Examiners, and Junior Foresters but we have been unable to offer any of them encouragement.

3. So far as we are concerned locally we would prefer to see the lessons sent out not oftener than twice a month. Last winter we were so rushed with emergency work that we had practically no time to devote to the studies work. It is possible that the same conditions will exist this coming winter.

It seems to me that it is sometimes best to branch out and take in two or three subjects at one time although the majority might feel that it would be best for interest to be focused on just one thing each time.

We agree that it is a good thing to have as many men as possible participate in the discussions.

C. J. Olsen

Toiyabe

Austin, Nevada

1. I approve of the general idea expressed in your discussion.

Assuming that there will be ten lessons, I believe that a selection of strictly live current problems should be made from suggestions of those participating and a decision made as to what order they will take in the course in order that participants can avail themselves of every opportunity for study.

This should not preclude desirable changes if they appear expedient later on.

2. The problems I should like discussed are:

(1) Administrative studies.

(2) Training of men on non-fire forests for fire suppression and protection work in emergencies. How best to accomplish.

(3) Transfers within our own organization. (Frequency and

desirability of)

(4) Job analysis.

(5) Selecting new men and training them.

(6) Important current developments in private business management.

3. The interval between studies should be fourteen days, on the basis of ten lessons. This would end the discussions about April 1, at which time field work, on most forests, demands attention. The ten-day interval did not give sufficient time to prepare discussions and mail them so as to reach Denver in time to be used.

Believe there should be a time limit for receipt of discussions. Otherwise there would be no regularity.

It appears that both lessons and discussions could be printed together, since this method would doubtless be more economical and would be just as efficient otherwise.

There appears to be merit in having representative discussions on the same subject published together instead of having them published at intervals. There would be no reason for publishing all discussions if representative papers were selected for publication.

I doubt that more than one subject should be discussed at a time. In fact it may require more than one discussion for some of the subjects. Current notes on private business management could be included if important.

I am of the opinion that you will have more live problems suggested in answer to this inquiry than there is time to discuss between now and April 1, 1932.

4. Agree with your plan as to who shall participate.

Believe studies will be more valuable if, as opportunity affords, they are discussed by several participants before individual replies are made.

Everard S. Keithley

Pike

Colorado Springs, Colo.

2. A man, whom I consider a successful business man, told me once that, if he had a man in his employ who could not do the specific job to which he had been assigned better than he could do it himself, he would fire him. Does this express a sound or practicable policy for an executive? If not, why not? If so, where does the need for training an employee in such an organization come in? No doubt this executive would qualify the above policy to include "after training the employee in his methods". Here again I get confused in that my conception of the training expected a supervisor shall give his assistants implies that he should know more about practically all the details of the job than the assistant. This seems desirable, yet how few executives possess such ability. Certainly the employee holds such executive in

much higher regard than where the reverse is true.

In running a planting camp several years ago I felt generally that I could perform personally any particular job in connection with the work, if I had the time for it just as well, if not better, than any man in the camp. The managing of a planting camp was small to that of managing a Forest of which planting is only one of many other activities. Things are different in this larger field with its greater responsibilities, and I am inclined to think there is much merit in what this business man told me. How about it?

Another problem. In service work there seems to be too much overlapping in the duties of the executive in that he must be both manager and laborer. Is this any more true in our work as executives because of the many activities of the Forest Service than in industry generally? "Never do anything you can get someone else to do for you" is the motto, I believe, of some successful executives. Presumably such executives have more freedom and leeway in assigning jobs than the average ranger or supervisor.

Acting, therefore, both as manager and laborer is creating a condition on many ranger districts and Forests which I call high pressure. Under such conditions the ranger and supervisor get their backs to the wall and fight, knocking out the jobs that are most urgent or demand action. Under such conditions corners are cut, that is, standards are lowered. The job must be done. The boat must be kept afloat and right side up. Work is left undone that ought to be done. They get disagreeable, fussy, and nervous. Accomplishment drops. How are the ranger and supervisor to pull themselves out of this mess? This condition probably is not peculiar to ranger and supervisor, but applies to other executive or semi-executive positions.

Still another problem about which I wish to know more is that of proper balance between commendation and condemnation of a man's work. Minor mistakes and blunders are more readily detected than minor examples of good work. The latter are too frequently overlooked, while reprimands are quick and frequently severe in the former. How maintain a proper balance?

3. Send out lessons every two weeks. Time limit should be set on lessons.

4. Regional Foresters and Assistant Regional Foresters ought to be in on the course.

Since my study period is during evenings at home, I desire that an additional copy of the lessons and discussions be sent the Pike for use of Executive Assistant, Stanley.

L. C. Stockdale

Missoula, Mont.

Reference is made to Lesson No. 1, Executive and Personnel Management on the National Forests.

1. The all-service study courses have been so satisfactory that there is no urge for a change. It would seem that the larger and more scattered the group the more the need to limit the subject of discussion to something like a prescribed course. In small groups interesting leads can be followed up to a far greater extent than in a larger group. However, if Mr. Keplinger wants to try a change, Region One is for it and hopes to contribute its share. The following suggestions are made with the carrying out of such a program in mind.

2. "Administrative Studies" covers a large field and might well occupy our attention for several lessons.

One subject mentioned in Keplinger's review of "A personnel Program for the Federal Civil Service" merits discussion in one of the lessons, and that is the question of the Service making provision for its share of the naturally inefficient. What is a proper load for the Service to assume and how can places be provided, etc? Possibly we have our share now but I doubt that there is any well defined recognition of that fact throughout the organization, and there certainly is little conception of the Service having a duty to perform in that direction. There seems to be a general tendency in the organization to shy away from this problem and the working out of a clear-cut solution of it. Keplinger's comments in his review (page 6) are rather typical of the comment most of us would give on the question at present.

3. With the plan of not adhering to any prescribed list of subjects in mind, it would seem that lessons could be sent out every two weeks—it would not be expected that everyone would send in discussions on each subject.

Surely there should be a time limit set when all discussions must be in. There are field trips in the winter that commonly take one and two weeks, and the limit should be about 30 days from the time the lessons are sent out.

It might be profitable to invite and publish a "comeback" on the preceding lesson and discussion. It would hardly pay to prolong the discussion longer. A few "die-hard debaters" might, if given the chance, tire out the majority.

As stated in No. 1 above, one subject at a time for discussion seems best.

4. It is probably true that progress is more the result of the small contributions of many, rather than big contributions of a few. Also, most of us would like to be heard and should be heard. But is it physically possible? What chance is there for Tom to get the floor in a group of 1,000? Take a mass meeting—who contributes? Certainly not the majority.

There is entire agreement that the study courses should be available to all. The question is how. One way might be to relay

the lessons out to smaller geographic, administrative, or classification groups for correspondence discussion. That is not possible at present for obvious reasons.

The plan suggested of having the lessons go to all Supervisors and to such others as desire them, and who it is felt will profit sufficiently to make it worth while, seems to be the best at present.

The requirements of this Region will be met by about the following distribution of lessons:

2 copies to each National Forest (1 for Supervisor's office and 1 for interested rangers.....	40
For Regional Office needs.....	20
	<hr/> 60

A. O. Waha

Portland, Oregon

Personally, the proposal for a change in the type of study course appeals to me, largely for the reason that the topics presented for discussion will be confined mostly to live problems. About every three weeks would be my idea of sending out the material and put a limitation of approximately two weeks for receipt of comments. Believe that ordinarily more than one topic or subject should be covered in one pamphlet. If the field really becomes interested in the project, there should be numerous suggestions for discussion, and there are bound to be many which will not be of the nature as to require lengthy discussions. As in the past, I believe the discussions should be in separate publications.

I think with you that the course should go to each Supervisor who then will be expected to tell you how many other men on his Forest are sufficiently interested to participate.

As to suggestions for problems to be discussed, I have but one to suggest now:

“What form of organization is required on a Forest where fire control and range management are important activities to insure proper handling of the range during bad fire seasons.”

